

JUDGE NAME: AS DISTRICT: Kathleen DiLorenzo ASSIGNED OFFICE: Springfield

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JUDGE'S PROCEDURAL RULES AND POLICIES

Workers' Compensation Automation and Integration System (WCAIS) is the official repository for all documents related to a Dispute (matter pending) before a Workers' Compensation Judge. All documents, including evidence and briefs, that would have been submitted to a Workers' Compensation Judge by mail or in person prior to WCAIS should now be uploaded into WCAIS. If Social Security numbers appear on any such document, they should be completely redacted before the document is uploaded, unless otherwise specified below. All communications with the Judge, including but not limited to requests, should be submitted through WCAIS unless otherwise specified by the Judge.

HEARING PROCEDURES

1. What is the first event and what will occur?

The first event entails the presentation of the Claimant's testimony, the testimony of another witness, and/or the submission of evidence and the specification of a scheduling order.

a. List any documents required at the first event:

No documents are required at the first event, with the exception of a hearing for the approval of a Compromise and Release Agreement and/or for an Order. For a hearing for the approval of a Compromise and Release Agreement, the redacted agreement, support documents, and fee agreement are required. For a hearing for an Order, any pertinent documents should be submitted.

b. Should documents be uploaded as Exhibits or Letters to the Judge?

Documents should be uploaded as exhibits.

2. Describe the format of your hearings (e.g., serial, one day – one trial).

My hearings are serial and a one day/one trial hearing may be requested.

3. Are you willing to change the hearing format upon request?

I'm willing to change the hearing format upon request.

4. What factors will you consider in deciding whether to conduct a hearing in-person?

An in-person hearing may occur after a request for it and within the judge's discretion after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties. The "critical" need for an in-person hearing is one factor which will be considered for an in-person listing at the time of the completion of this questionnaire and its posting into WCAIS.

5. What factors will you consider in deciding whether to conduct a virtual hearing by audio only or by audio with video?

A virtual hearing by audio only or by audio with video may occur after consideration of a request for it and within the judge's discretion after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties. One factor is the party's/participant's capability to access a virtual hearing by audio with video.

6. What procedure do you follow if a party fails to appear at a hearing?

I have no specific procedure if a party doesn't appear at a hearing.

7. Do you have special procedures for psychological injury cases?

I have no special procedures for psychological injury cases.

SUPERSEDEAS PROCEDURES

1. What are your procedures for supersedeas hearings?

For supersedeas hearings, testimony from the Claimant and/or any other witness is taken, supersedeas exhibits are submitted, continuance requests for the submission of supersedeas documents are considered, and a scheduling order is placed on the record.

a. Will testimony be heard?

Testimony will be heard.

b. Is additional time generally granted to obtain medical evidence?

Additional time for the submission of medical and/or other evidence is generally granted.

c. Under what circumstances will you reconsider a supersedeas order?

I'll reconsider a supersedeas order upon the parties' request for reconsideration.

d. Do you generally use written orders for denials?

Written orders are generally used for denials.

e. What is required for employee's counsel to obtain interim fee approval?

Testimony from the Claimant with respect to the Claimant's understanding of the fee agreement and the submission of the fee agreement into the record and approval of it are required for the Claimant's counsel to obtain an interim fee.

f. Describe any other procedures for supersedeas hearings:

None.

g. Describe procedures for special supersedeas hearings, if different:

They aren't different.

WITNESSES/EXHIBITS

1. What are your rules regarding taking testimony?

Testimony is taken at the first hearing, at subsequent hearings, and at the last hearing.

2. Do you require testimony at a virtual hearing, an in-person hearing, or by deposition?

Testimony is generally required at a virtual hearing and can be supplemented/taken by deposition. A request for testimony at an in-person hearing will be considered.

3. Under what circumstances will you change your requirements for presentation of testimony?

The requirements for the presentation of testimony may be changed upon a party's request and after consideration of the specified reasons for the request.

4. If counsel wishes to present the testimony of a witness (either virtually or in-person), do you require prior notice? Prior notice isn't required for the presentation of testimony. If yes, how much notice do you require? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

5. What is your procedure regarding the order of expert medical testimony when cross petitions are filed?

The first petitioning party generally first presents expert medical testimony.

6. Do the parties need to upload the Bureau and WCOA documents as exhibits or will you admit them electronically as Judge exhibits?

The parties aren't required to upload Bureau and WCOA documents as exhibits and Bureau and WCOA documents may be admitted as Judge exhibits.

7. Do you require counsel to upload exhibits to WCAIS before or after the hearing? There's no requirement to upload exhibits before a hearing with the exception of a hearing for the approval of a Compromise and Release Agreement. If before, how far in advance of the hearing must they be uploaded? The exhibits for a hearing for the approval of a Compromise and Release Agreement should be uploaded before the hearing.

8. When will you rule on objections to exhibits?

Rulings will be made on objections to exhibits when the parties request a ruling on them or when the judge specifies a particular time for a ruling on them.

9. What is your procedure for handling discovery disputes?

Discovery disputes are handled by a hearing, by a conference call, and/or by motions and a subsequent interlocutory order.

10. What is the last day to file written preservations of deposition objections?

The last day for a party's submission of objections is the date of the submission of the objecting party's brief.

COMPROMISE & RELEASES (C&Rs)

1. Describe your procedures regarding the review of C&R Agreements:

The C & R Agreement is reviewed before or at the hearing.

a. Are you willing to allow amendments of existing petitions or do you require the filing of a separate Petition Seeking Approval of a C&R Agreement?

Amendments of existing petitions are allowed. Separate petitions may be required upon certain circumstances.

b. Are parties required to provide a draft of the C&R Agreement before the hearing? If yes, how far in advance of the hearing do you need to receive it?

A draft of the C & R Agreement before the hearing isn't required.

c. Should the parties upload the signed C&R Agreement, including the fee agreement and any other attachments, before or after the hearing?

A signed and redacted C & R Agreement, the fee agreement, and any other attachments with pertinent redactions should be uploaded before the hearing.

d. Should child support documents be uploaded as a separate exhibit?

Support documents should be uploaded as a separate exhibit.

e. Should Social Security numbers and other confidential information be redacted from the C&R Agreement and Act 109 documents?

Social Security numbers and other confidential information should be redacted from the C & R Agreement and Act 109 documents.

f. Will you sign bench orders?

I will sign bench orders.

g. Describe any other procedures you have for C&R Agreements:

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STIPULATIONS RESOLVING DISPUTES

1. What are your usual procedures regarding the submission, review, and adoption of stipulations?

Executed stipulations should be uploaded into WCAIS. They will be reviewed, generally adopted, and attached to a Decision and Order after their adoption and inclusion into Findings of Fact.

2. Should the fee agreement be part of the stipulation or separate exhibit?

The fee agreement can be a separate exhibit and a provision with respect to the terms of the fee agreement should be included in the Stipulation of Fact.

3. Should child support documents be uploaded as a separate exhibit?

Support documents should be uploaded as a separate exhibit.

4. What other exhibits should be uploaded (i.e. medical bills, etc.)?

Any other pertinent exhibits can be uploaded and/or attached to the stipulation.

5. Should other exhibits uploaded as be part of the stipulation or as separate exhibits?

Any other pertinent exhibits can be uploaded and/or attached to the stipulation.

6. When should Social Security numbers and other confidential information be redacted from the stipulation and Act 109 documents?

Social Security numbers and other confidential information should always be redacted from the stipulation and Act 109 documents.

7. Describe any other procedures you have for stipulations:

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BRIEFS AND PROPOSED FINDINGS

1. Will you close a case via WCAIS submission or is a final hearing required?

A final hearing is generally required for the submission of evidence. A final hearing isn't required for the submission of a stipulation or upon the agreement of the parties in particular situations, like an agreed-upon order.

2. What are the time requirements for final submissions and what procedures are taken when time requirements are not met?

The time requirements for final submissions are set at the hearing for closure of the record. Parties should request extensions of time for final submissions when time requirements may not be met.

3. Describe any preferences regarding the format and content of final submissions:

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MANDATORY MEDIATIONS

1. List the offices where you conduct mandatory mediations:

I conduct virtual mandatory mediations and will conduct in-person mandatory mediations in the Springfield, Pa. office in the future and within the judge's discretion.

2. What factors will you consider in deciding whether to conduct a mandatory mediation virtually or in-person?

I'll consider a request for a virtual mandatory mediation upon the parties' request for it. I'll consider a request for a future in-person mandatory mediation after consideration of a request for it and within the judge's discretion after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties. The "critical" need for an in-person mediation is one factor which will be considered for a future in-person mediation at the time of this judge's completion of this questionnaire and of the posting of it in WCAIS.

- 3. What factors will you consider in deciding whether to conduct a virtual mandatory mediation by audio only or by audio with video?**

I'll consider a request for a virtual mandatory mediation by audio only or by audio with video after a review of the party's request for a specific type of virtual mandatory mediation and within the judge's discretion after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties. One factor is the party's/participant's capability to access a mediation by audio with video.

- 4. Are you willing to allow counsel or a party to participate virtually in an in-person mandatory mediation? If so, under what circumstances?**

A party may participate virtually in an in-person mandatory mediation and no special circumstances are required.

- 5. Do you require a Mediation Statement? No mediation statements are required and mediation statements are preferred. If yes:**

- a. What information do you require in that Statement?**

No specific information is required.

- b. What documents, if any, must accompany the Statement?**

No specific documents must accompany the statement.

- c. How far in advance of the mediation must the parties submit the Statement and accompanying documents?**

The parties aren't required to submit a statement and accompanying documents within any specific time.

- 6. If there is a request to postpone a mandatory mediation, will it be rescheduled? A mandatory mediation will not be rescheduled after a request for a postponement or cancellation. Only a voluntary mediation may be scheduled after a request for a postponement or cancellation of a mandatory mediation. If so, how long until it is rescheduled? A voluntary mediation can be immediately scheduled on an agreed upon date and time between the parties and the judge at the time of a request for a voluntary mediation.**

- 7. Are you willing to conduct more than one mandatory mediation session per Dispute?**

I will conduct more than one mandatory mediation session per dispute.

- 8. What is the latest day before the mediation that cancellation or postponement, absent an emergency, can be requested?**

A cancellation or postponement of a mediation, absent an emergency, should be requested one day at least before the mediation.

9. What else should the parties know or do before the mediation?

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VOLUNTARY MEDIATIONS

1. Do you conduct Voluntary Mediations?

I will conduct voluntary mediations.

2. How should the parties request a Voluntary Mediation?

The parties can request a voluntary mediation in WCAIS, through an email to the judge, and/or through any other preferred WCOA means.

3. List the locations where you conduct in-person voluntary mediations:

I will conduct in-person voluntary mediations in Springfield, Pa. in the future and within the judge's discretion.

4. Will you conduct virtual voluntary mediations? If yes, for which WCOA Districts will you conduct them?

I'll conduct virtual voluntary mediations for any WCOA district.

5. Do you mediate Disputes assigned to you for hearing and decision?

I generally don't mediate disputes which are assigned to me for decision.

6. Do you mediate Disputes in which one or both parties are unrepresented? If yes, describe any special procedures you have for such cases:

I can mediate disputes in which one or both parties are unrepresented. There are no special procedures for such mediations.

7. What factors will you consider in deciding whether to conduct a voluntary mediation virtually or in-person?

I'll conduct a virtual voluntary mediation upon the parties' request for it and after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties. I'll conduct an in-person voluntary mediation in the future and within the judge's discretion after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties.

8. What factors will you consider in deciding whether to conduct a virtual voluntary mediation by audio only or by audio with video?

I'll consider the request for a virtual voluntary mediation by audio only or by audio with video after a review of the party's request for a specific type of virtual voluntary mediation and within the judge's discretion after consideration of any cited factors for it by the parties. One factor is the party's/participant's capability to access a mediation by audio with video.

9. Are you willing to allow counsel or a party to participate virtually in an in-person voluntary mediation? If so, under what circumstances?

A party and/or counsel may participate virtually in an in-person voluntary mediation and no particular circumstances must exist.

10. Do you require a Mediation Statement? A mediation statements isn't required and is preferred. If yes:

- a. What information do you require in that Statement?

No particular information is required in a statement.

- b. What documents, if any, must accompany the Statement?

No particular documents must accompany the statement.

- c. How far in advance of the mediation must the parties submit the Statement and accompanying documents?

The parties should submit the statement and accompanying documents on or before the day before the mediation.

11. After you approve a Voluntary Mediation Request, how long until it is scheduled?

The voluntary mediation will immediately be scheduled upon a request for it.

12. Are you willing to conduct more than one voluntary mediation session per Dispute?

I will conduct more than one voluntary mediation per dispute.

13. If the party wants to request cancellation or postponement of a voluntary mediation on a Dispute assigned to you, should they contact you or the mediating Judge?

A party should contact the judge who will voluntarily mediate the dispute.

14. What is the latest day before the mediation that cancellation or postponement, absent an emergency, can be requested?

A party should follow the mediating judge's guidelines for cancellations or postponements.

15. What else should the parties know or do before the mediation?

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REQUESTS/MISCELLANEOUS

1. How far in advance do you require Requests for continuances, changes in hearing times, and extensions to be uploaded into WCAIS?

There are no required time frames for requests for continuances, changes in hearing times, and extensions and they should be made on the day before the hearing at least or on the day before the due date at least for the submission.

2. Under what circumstances do you conduct off the record conference calls?

An off the record conference call will be conducted at the parties' request.

3. Under what conditions/circumstances do you accept e-mails from parties?

Emails are accepted from parties and all parties should be included on the emails.

4. Do you adhere strictly to the duration listed for a Hearing or Mediation?

I don't strictly adhere to the listed duration for a hearing or mediation.

5. What is the best way to contact you in an emergency situation?

The best way is through WCAIS, email, or correspondence with staff.

6. What is your snow/emergency cancellation policy regarding in-person and virtual events (i.e., do you follow a specific school district closing schedule, etc.)?

In-person events are cancelled when the School District of Philadelphia cancels classes and/or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Office of Administration and/or WCOA cancels in-person work. Virtual proceedings will not be cancelled.

Please see the Teams/Virtual Events Tips & Training tile on our [Website](#) for more information on how to use Microsoft Teams for WCOA Hearings and Mediations.